

Safeguarding Policy for Mini All Stars

Introduction

Mini All Stars is committed to establishing a safe and positive environment for all children participating in our sports coaching programmes, which encompass Physical Education (PE) in schools, extracurricular clubs, and holiday clubs. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and are dedicated to ensuring their protection across all dimensions of our operations.

1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to provide clear guidelines to all staff, volunteers, and coaches regarding their responsibilities in safeguarding the children within our care. We aim to cultivate a culture of safety and to establish a framework for identifying and responding to concerns regarding child welfare.

2. Principles

The welfare of the child is of paramount importance and shall take precedence over all other interests. All children possess the fundamental right to protection from abuse, neglect, and harm. We recognise that children have the right to express their views, be heard, and participate in decisions that affect them. We are committed to sharing and promoting proper safeguarding practices throughout all levels of our company.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Harvey Giovanni Upson shall serve as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and will be the primary point of contact for all safeguarding concerns. The DSL is responsible for overseeing safeguarding policies, practices, and staff training, liaising with external agencies where necessary, ensuring that all safeguarding incidents are recorded accurately and stored securely, and taking appropriate action following any reported concern.

Andrew Wescott will act as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and will support the DSL in their duties. In the absence of the DSL, the Deputy DSL will take responsibility for safeguarding matters.

All staff and volunteers are required to adhere to this policy, complete necessary safeguarding training, and report any concerns regarding a child's welfare without delay. Staff must understand their responsibility to act immediately if a child is at risk of harm. If a concern involves the DSL, it must be reported directly to the Deputy DSL or, where appropriate, to external safeguarding agencies.

4. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy is written in accordance with key legislative and statutory frameworks, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty), and the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. All staff are required to read KCSIE Part 1 (or Annex A as appropriate), as well as the safeguarding policy and staff code of conduct of any school in which they are working.

5. Types of Abuse

Staff and volunteers must be aware of the main categories of abuse, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Physical abuse involves causing physical harm to a child, while emotional abuse refers to the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, and neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. Staff should also be aware of wider safeguarding concerns such as child-on-child abuse, online abuse, grooming, and exploitation.

6. Recruitment and Training

Mini All Stars is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. A thorough recruitment process will be followed, including reference checks, verification of identity and qualifications, and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. At least one member of staff involved in recruitment will have completed safer recruitment training.

All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role. This includes recognising signs of abuse and neglect, understanding reporting procedures, and being aware of current safeguarding issues, including online safety and peer-on-peer abuse.

7. Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to maintain professional boundaries with children at all times, treating them with respect and fostering positive interactions. Staff must avoid situations that could lead to allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

Physical contact should be kept to a minimum and must always be appropriate to the activity, in the best interests of the child, and carried out with awareness and, where appropriate, consent. Any breach of conduct must be reported and managed in line with this policy.

8. Reporting Concerns

If any individual has a concern regarding the welfare of a child, they must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Concerns may relate to suspected abuse, neglect, behaviour that may harm a child's well-being, or concerns about another member of staff.

When reporting a concern, staff must make a clear and factual record of what they have observed or been told and pass this information to the DSL without delay. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child and must follow the instructions of the DSL.

If a child is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted by calling 999, and the DSL must be informed as soon as possible. Where appropriate, concerns may be referred to Children's Social Care or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Food, health, and educational welfare are important considerations when identifying safeguarding concerns. All concerns will be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality.

9. Responding to a Disclosure

If a child discloses information, staff must listen carefully and remain calm. They should not ask leading questions but may ask open questions to clarify basic facts. The child should be reassured that they have done the right thing, but staff must not promise confidentiality. The information must be recorded as soon as possible and reported immediately to the DSL.

10. Whistleblowing

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to report any concerns regarding colleagues or practices that may jeopardise child safety. Mini All Stars will ensure that a clear whistleblowing procedure is in place so that concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation. Where necessary, concerns may also be raised with external agencies.

11. Online Safety

Mini All Stars recognises the importance of safeguarding children in a digital environment. Staff must use professional communication methods at all times and must not contact children through personal social media accounts. Any photographs or videos of children must only be taken with appropriate parental consent and used in line with data protection regulations. Staff must ensure that children's personal information is handled safely and securely at all times.

12. Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns and incidents must be recorded accurately and promptly. Records will be stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR and will only be accessible to authorised individuals. Proper record keeping is essential to ensure that concerns are monitored and followed up appropriately.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and to reflect any changes in legislation or organisational practices. Feedback from staff, parents, and, where appropriate, children will be considered as part of this process to continuously improve safeguarding practices.

14. Partnerships

Mini All Stars will work in partnership with parents, schools, and external agencies to ensure that the welfare of children is upheld. We are committed to open communication and will actively involve parents in safeguarding discussions where appropriate, ensuring a collaborative approach to keeping children safe.

Conclusion

At Mini All Stars, we prioritise the safety and well-being of every child involved in our programmes. We are committed to fostering a supportive and protective environment where every child can thrive, engage in sports, and develop their skills securely.

Key Contacts

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